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Cal Poly Arts Brings Pianist Michael Feinstein Feb. 21

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA – Michael Feinstein, the premiere interpreter of American popular song, is back at the Cohan Center in an elegant encore Cal Poly Arts performance.

Feinstein will perform an intimate solo concert at the grand piano on Thursday, February 21, 2008 at 8 p.m. at the Cohan Center.

"(Michael) Feinstein is all things to all people: host, singer, pianist, raconteur, comic and all-around entertainer... As a music historian alone, he is an essential national resource," wrote Stephen Holden of the New York Times

The song-filled evening promises stylish standards, present-day pop, and beloved Broadway, laced with engaging anecdotes, sentimental moments, and fun facts on the musical background of audience favorites.

"Michael Feinstein began his career as a musical archivist with an insider's knowledge of popular singing. Now he is a full-fledged singing idol, making love to his audiences, and delighting us with offbeat anecdotes, jokes, and heartfelt patriotism. People just eat him up. " – Liz Smith, New York Post

"Feinstein demonstrates he's not mainly a singer or musician or walking encyclopedia of American popular song. He is an entertainer, and a grand one at that." - Steven Suskin, Variety

Michael Feinstein has been a household name since the success of his 1988 one-man Broadway show, Isn't It Romantic. He enjoys an active performance calendar, including major concert halls, symphony orchestras, intimate jazz clubs, and college campuses.

More than a mere performer, he is nationally recognized for his commitment to the American popular song, both celebrating its art and preserving its legacy for the next generation.

Feinstein started playing piano by ear when he was five. After graduating from high school, he worked in local piano lounges for two years, moving to Los Angeles when he was 20. Through the widow of legendary concert pianist-actor Oscar Levant, he was introduced to Ira Gershwin in July 1977.

Feinstein became Gershwin's assistant for six years, granting Feinstein access to numerous unpublished Gershwin songs, which he has since performed and recorded.

Gershwin's influence provided a solid base upon which Feinstein also become an unparalleled interpreter of music legends such as Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern, Johnny Mercer, Duke Ellington, and Harry Warren.

His discography is vast and varied; Feinstein's 2004 CD, Only One Life – The Songs of Jimmy Webb, was named one of "10 Best CDs of the Year" by USA Today. In 2003, he received his fourth Grammy Award nomination for Michael Feinstein with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra.

He hosted and produced "The Great American Songbook," a popular running PBS special that traces the history of popular music in America.

Feinstein is currently producing a CD for friend Liza Minnelli. He will also host and serve as consultant on a new PBS film on vintage Hollywood "Soundies" and is producing a documentary feature on arts and society icon Kitty Carlisle Hart.

He has written the score for a new stage musical, The Gold Room, opening soon in London's West End. His latest CD is Hopeless Romantics, a songbook of Harry Warren classics recorded with legendary jazz pianist George Shearing.

His Manhattan nightclub, Feinstein's at the Regency, has presented the top talents of pop and jazz. Feinstein appears there himself for a sold-out holiday engagement every year and last fall, he completed a sold-out two week engagement at the Theatre Royal Haymarket in London's West End.

General public tickets for the performance range from \$42 to \$54, with student discounts available on all seats, and may be purchased at the Performing Arts Ticket Office, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays.

To order by phone, call 805/756-2787; to order by fax: 805/756-6088.

Order on-line at www.pacslo.org.

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For more information on all Cal Poly Arts events, including audio and video samples, please visit www.calpolyarts.org.

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